



September 2006

Newsletter for English Teachers

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Back to School – U.S. Elementary and Secondary Schools

For most elementary and secondary school students, the Labor Day weekend heralds the end of summer vacation. After one last long weekend, often spent away from home at a beach or a holiday resort, the school year starts again. With only a few short breaks, it will last until late May or early June.

The United States does not have a national school system, and education is primarily a State and local responsibility. States, communities, public and private organizations establish schools and colleges, develop curricula, and determine requirements for enrollment and graduation. Each of the states has its own laws regulating education

(<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d05/lt2.asp#14>).

About 90% of the estimated \$909 billion being spent nationwide on education at all levels for school year 2004-2005 comes from State, local, and private sources.

Traditionally, elementary school includes kindergarten through the eighth grade. In some places, however, elementary school ends after the sixth grade, and students attend middle school, or junior high school, from grades seven through nine. Similarly, secondary school, or high school, traditionally comprises grades nine through twelve, but in some places begins at the tenth grade.

The government provides guidance and funding for federal educational programs through the Department of Education (<http://www.ed.gov>). Not until this 1979 was the "Office of Education" elevated to a "Department", i.e. a separate, cabinet-level agency. This agency of the federal government establishes policy for, administers, and coordinates most federal assistance to education. It assists the president in executing his education policies for the nation and in implementing laws enacted by Congress.



Taking the school bus

(www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/November05/Features/Education.htm)

Fast Facts

54% 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in school
68% of children enrolled in kindergarten attend all day
55 million students are enrolled in the nation's elementary and high schools
22% of elementary and high school students have at least one foreign-born parent
6.8 million teachers work in the United States, of which 2.6 million teach at the elementary and middle school level
\$46,800 is the national average annual salary of public elementary and secondary school teachers
14.2 million computers are available for classroom use in the nation's 114,700 elementary and secondary schools (one computer for every four students)
1.1 million students are homeschooled (2% of all students ages 5 to 17)

Read more

★ **About the USA > Society > Education**

<http://usa.usembassy.de/society-education.htm>

★ **Facts for Features: Back to School 2006-2007.** U.S. Census Bureau.

http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/007108.html

★ **Digest of Education Statistics.** National Center for Education Statistics, August 2006.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006030>

★ **Current Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2003-04.**

National Center for Education Statistics, August 2006.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006352>

★ **Homeschooling in the United States** (National Center for Education Statistics)

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006042.pdf>

EducationUSA Germany: U.S. Government Advising Services on Educational and Cultural Exchange

<http://www.usembassy.de/germany/exchanges/>



In conjunction with the U.S. Department of State's Education USA program, the Information Resource Centers of the U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany's Public Affairs section offer telephone and web-based reference and referral services for information on exchange opportunities, including "High School Year Abroad".

Telephone InfoLine: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 14:00-17:00, Tel: 030 - 31 80 08 99

Email: austausch@state.gov

Webchat: Second Monday in every month: 15:00-16:00 pm. (<http://www.us-botschaft.de/germany-ger/austausch/webchat.html>)

In addition, the Embassy supports a network of Education USA advising centers in Germany. A list of advising center is available at

http://www.usembassy.de/germany/exchanges/advising_centers.html

Space

Thomas Reiter from Frankfurt/Main is Germany's first astronaut to visit the International Space Station (ISS). Reiter, who will spend 175 days on the ISS, is also the first long-duration ISS crewmember who is neither a U.S. nor a Russian astronaut.

★ **About the USA > Science & Technology > Space**

<http://usa.usembassy.de/technology-space.htm>

★ **NASA - National Aeronautics and Space Administration**

<http://www.nasa.gov/home/index.html>

★ **NASA For Educators**

<http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/9-12/features/index.html>

★ **International Space Station – Expedition 13**

http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/expeditions/expedition13/index.html

★ **Smithsonian – National Air and Space Museum, Washington D.C. – Education Materials**

http://www.nasm.si.edu/education/resources_classroom.cfm

★ **America's Space Program: Exploring a New Frontier**

(Teaching with Historic Places Lesson Plan)

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/101space/101space.htm>

★ **Earthkam**

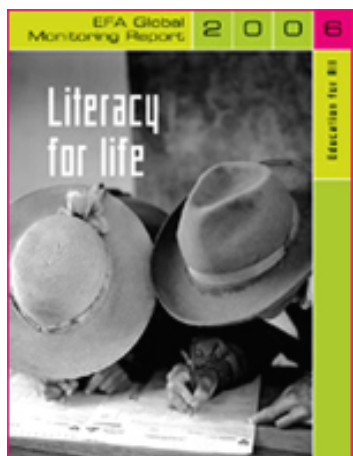
<http://www.earthkam.ucsd.edu/>

"ISS EarthKAM is a NASA sponsored program that provides stunning, high quality photographs of our planet taken from the Space Shuttle and International Space Station. Includes a searchable image database, and information for educators and students



http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/expeditions/expedition13/index.html

From left: Astronaut Thomas Reiter, Commander Pavel Vinogradov and Flight Engineer and NASA Science Officer Jeffrey Williams. Photo credit: Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center



Education For All: Global Monitoring Report (Unesco)

http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=43009&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

History

1966 Establishment of International Literacy Day upon recommendation of the 1965 World Conference of Ministers.

1967 First UNESCO International Literacy Day celebration.

1975 International Reading Association begins association with UNESCO.

1979 First International Reading Association Literacy Award presented.

1980 Creation of the Noma Prize

1985 Fourth International Conference on Adult Education.

1989 Establishment of the King Sejong Award

1990 "International Literacy Year" proclaimed by the United Nations.

1997 5th International Conference on Adult Education, Hamburg Germany.

1998 Malcolm Adiseshiah International Literacy Prize

2000 "Literacy in the Information Age" panel discussion held at the United States Library of Congress in coordination with the International Literacy Day commemoration.

2001 National Adult Literacy Survey released, the survey reported new information about adult illiteracy in America.

2002 UNESCO's International Literacy Day celebrated for the 38th time with the theme "Literacy as Freedom," which linked literacy to development.

2003-2015 United Nations Literacy Decade - an initiative to energize work towards reaching the goal of increasing literacy levels by 50% by the year 2015.

http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/literacy_day/id_history.html

September 8: International Literacy Day

International Literacy Day, celebrated since 1966 annually on September 8, calls attention to the global effort to promote literacy and education as a central United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) mission. In 2003, the UN launched the United Nations Literacy Decade - an initiative intended to energize work towards reaching the goal of increasing literacy levels by 50% by the year 2015.

<http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/index.shtml>

On September 18, 2006, the first lady, Mrs Laura Bush, co-sponsors a conference on global literacy in New York immediately prior to the opening of the new session of the United Nations General Assembly. Laura Bush announced the conference on April 24, during a UNESCO luncheon marking Education for All Week. The Education for All movement originated in 1990 when participants at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, pledged to support primary education for all children and to reduce adult illiteracy.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/Archive/2006/Apr/25-37813.html>

The Big Read (National Endowment for the Arts)

<http://www.neabigread.org/>

"The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and in cooperation with Arts Midwest. It is designed to revitalize the role of literature in American popular culture and bring the transformative power of literature into the lives of its citizens. The Big Read works with multiple partners across the country to encourage citizens to read for pleasure and enlightenment." Mrs. Laura Bush is the honorary chair of the Big Read (<http://www.nea.gov/news/news06/BRloc.html>)

Litcam: Frankfurt Book Fair launches education drive

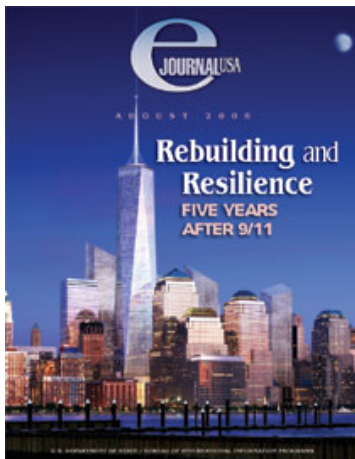
<http://www.litcam.de/litcam/de/index.php>

Frankfurt Book Fair's new key focus "Education for the Future" sets out to draw attention to the growing importance of education in the age of digitisation and globalization. The programme looks at: literacy campaigns, learning in schools and careers training for the industry. The closing event on October 8 features the topic of "Functional illiteracy despite compulsory school attendance" with a panel discussion and a reading by well-known actors and authors of texts by people who have been illiterate. Illiteracy will also be discussed during the first Frankfurt Teachers' Congress on October 7th at the Congress Center. Topics covered at this event, specifically for teachers, are the encouragement of reading, provision of literature and computer learning.

One Book" Reading Promotion Projects

<http://www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/one-book.html>

In 1998, the Washington center for the Book initiated the first Community-wide reading project with "If all of Seattle read the same book". This web resource explains the Congress ton Center for the Book initiated the first Community-wide reading project with "If All of Seattle Read the Same Book". This web resource explains the project and lists city and statewide projects across the U.S.A. From The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.



<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0806/ijpe/ijpe0806.htm>

9/11 Chronology

8:46 AM Plane crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center.
 9:03 AM Plane crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center.
 9:17 AM The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) shuts down all New York City area airports.
 9:21 AM The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) halts all flights at U.S. airports.
 9:38 AM Plane crashes into the Pentagon. Evacuation begins immediately.
 9:45 AM The White House evacuates.
 10:05 AM The south tower of the World Trade Center collapses.
 10:10 AM A portion of the Pentagon collapses.
 10:10 AM Plane crashes in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.
 10:22 AM The State and Justice Departments, as well as the World Bank are evacuated.
 10:28 AM The World Trade Center's north tower collapses.
 10:45 AM All federal office buildings in Washington, D.C. are evacuated.
 1:44 PM Five warships and two aircraft carriers are ordered to leave the U.S. Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia to protect the East Coast.
 4:10 PM Building 7 of the World Trade Center collapses.

9/11 Victims

Victims came from more than 90 countries around the world. The following are the number of people who died at each site:

World Trade Center (includes airline passengers)	2,823
Pentagon	125 (not including plane victims)
Flight 11	92 people on board
Flight 175	64 people on board
Flight 77	64 people on board
Flight 93	44 people on board

<http://www.state.gov/coalition/cr/fs/12701.htm>

E-Journal: Rebuilding and Resilience: Five Years After 9/11

"Five years after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, the world continues to witness the effects of terrorism in places like London, Madrid, Bali, and Mumbai. And yet, in each of these places, and in New York and Washington, D.C., once the debris was cleared and the dead mourned, communities began the process of rebuilding their cities and their lives. Despite the best efforts of terrorists to disrupt peace, the resilience of people around the world, has demonstrated that the human spirit will always triumph over tragedy.

We open with an essay by native New Yorker and president of Hudson Institute Dr. Herbert London, who writes that in the once-destroyed area surrounding the World Trade Center, new high-rise buildings "seem to rise magically," demonstrating hope and resilience.

Although the United States continues to move forward, significant security concerns remain in this post-9/11 world. In "America Extends a Warm Welcome to Visitors," the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs describes improvements to the U.S. visa process that welcomes visitors while supporting U.S. border security to protect those living in the United States and international travelers. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, communities throughout the United States pulled together to support one another. In a panel discussion, three leaders from various religious communities—Imam Yahya Hendi, Rabbi Kenneth Cohen, and Reverend Clark Lobenstine—discuss how reaching out to other religions and religious leaders brought their communities together since the 9/11 attacks. "New Beginnings" tells the personal stories of survivors of terrorist attacks who have turned tragedy into positive life changes. In "Common Myths About al-Qaida Terrorism," Dr. Marc Sageman, an independent terrorism expert, describes popular misconceptions about terrorists and those who support them.

Webchat: Sept. 11 Five Years after 9/11 Foreign Policy Challenges

http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/USINFO/Products/Webchats/london_12_sept_2006.html

Foreign policy challenges five years after the attacks of September 11, 2001 are the subject of a USINFO Webchat. Join Dr. Herbert London, a contributing author to the State Department's latest eJournal USA "Rebuilding and Resilience Five Years After 9/11" for an online discussion coinciding with the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

Guest Biography: Dr. Herbert London is president of Hudson Institute in New York City. The former John M. Olin University Professor of Humanities at New York University, he founded the Gallatin School there in 1972 and was its dean until 1992. His social commentary has appeared in major newspapers and journals throughout the United States.

Read webchat transcript:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Archive/2006/Sep/13-600716.html>

**InfoAlert - For More on Trends and
Current Events in the United States**

infoalert.usembassy.de

InfoAlert highlights recent articles and reports from leading U.S. journals and provides informed commentary on international and domestic issues.

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Upcoming Teacher Training Seminar

November 10 – 12

**Teaching American Cultures at the Beginning of a New Century:
Current Trends and Future Directions**

Teacher Seminar at the Akademie für Lehrerfortbildung und Personalführung,
Dillingen

[More information \(pdf\)](#)

Please contact Karin Rosnizeck rosnizeckkm@state.gov or tel. 089 - 2888-626.

New York City Landmarks Exhibit at Amerika Haus until October 3

For more information and other programs at the Amerika Haus go to:

<http://www.amerikahaus.de/>

School Outreach Program

What do Americans think about Germany?

How does the American election system work?

When does an American school day start, and when does it end?

These are some of the questions that German students ask the American speakers at our Consulate school outreach programs.

These programs provide German secondary school students with the opportunity to meet with American exchange students, as well as Consulate staff, to learn more about everyday life in the United States

Inquiries from interested schools should be directed to: rosnizeckkm@state.gov

For more information: <http://germany.usembassy.gov/germany/speakers.html>

contact: ircmunich@state.gov